

REMARKS**Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102(a), 103(a)**

Claims 1-6, 10-14, 18, and 20-25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,822,206 to Sebastian et al. (hereinafter Sebastian).

Claims 7-9, 15-17, and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Sebastian in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,445,974 to Malaugh et al. (hereinafter Malaugh).

Applicant has amended independent claims 1, 10, and 18 to include limitations similar to limitations previously recited in other claims (see previous claims 2-4, 11, and 21). Claims 2-4 and 11 have been cancelled and claims 8, 12, 16, and 20 has been amended in view of the amendments to the independent claims. A minor typographical error has been corrected in claim 15. Additionally, Applicant has amended claim 21 to replace “facilitating” with -- processing--. Accordingly, Applicant submits that none of the amendments present new issues and, hence, the amendments are proper after final.

Claim 1 recites, in part:

a product fulfillment interface which captures how well said product function fulfills said product requirements, wherein said product fulfillment interface further generates responses to queries related to levels of fulfillments of requirements encapsulated in product requirement objects by alternative designs encapsulated in design alternative objects.

Claim 10 recites, in part:

generating responses, by a requirement fulfillment interface, to queries related to levels of fulfillment of requirements encapsulated in product requirement objects by alternative designs encapsulated in said plurality of design alternative objects.

Claim 18 recites, in part:

generating responses, by a requirement fulfillment interface, to queries related to levels of fulfillment of requirements encapsulated in product requirement objects by alternative designs encapsulated in said plurality of design alternative objects.

Claim 21 recites, in part:

a requirement fulfillment interface for processing queries related to levels of fulfillment of requirements encapsulated in said product requirement objects by alternative designs encapsulated in said design alternative objects.

The Examiner has asserted that Sebastian discloses a requirement fulfillment interface and has cited col. 8, lines 54-65 to support this assertion. Office Action, page 2. However, the actual text of Sebastian does not address the claimed subject matter. Specifically, Sebastian discloses:

The core design module uses pre-parameterized geometric elements that are organized under their end-use functionality in the part. Thus, the core design module facilitates rapid definition of the part geometry, as an "assembly" operation in contrast to the "drawing" operation typical of CAD systems. Because the functional organization of geometry determines the context for engineering decisions necessary to meet the performance requirements, complex inference schemes are unnecessary. Furthermore, engineering algorithms allow for definition of geometric parameters to complete the design, in contrast to simulation-based approaches that require full definition of geometry.

Col. 8, lines 54-65.

Thus, it is seen that Sebastian merely discloses an organization of geometric elements according to end-use functionality. This organization according to Sebastian facilitates desired engineering practices. However, there is no mention in Sebastian of submitting "queries related to levels of fulfillment of requirements encapsulated in product requirement objects." Moreover, there is no "processing" of such queries or "generation" of responses to such queries by an interface in relation to "design alternative objects." Moreover, Maluagh is merely related to a CAD-neutral application programming interface and is not relied upon by the Examiner to address the "requirement fulfillment interface" limitations of claims 1, 10, 18, and 21. *See* Abstract of Malaugh.

Accordingly, the cited references do not teach or suggest each and every limitation of claims 1, 10, 18, and 21. Applicant submits that these claims are patentable. Claims 5-9, 12-17, 19, 21-25 respectively depend from base claims 1, 10, 18, and 21 and are likewise patentable as depending from an allowable base claim and also in view of novel and nonobvious features and combinations recited therein.

Conclusion

In view of the above amendment, Applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance. Applicant believes no fee is due with this response. However, if a fee is due, please charge our Deposit Account No. 08-2025, under Order No. 10003656-1 from which the undersigned is authorized to draw.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as Express Mail, Airbill No. EV482746185US, in an envelope addressed to: MS AF, Commissioner for Patents, PO Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date shown below.

Date of Deposit: December 7, 2004

Typed Name: Phyllis Ewing

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Respectfully submitted,

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